LABOUR MARKET TRENDS

AND

HUMAN RESOURCE ISSUES

Information for Employers in Alberta

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Alberta
CAREER DEVELOPMENT
AND EMPLOYMENT
Apprenticeship and Trade
Certification Program
Access Initiatives Branch

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INTRODUCTION

Alberta business is facing dramatic new challenges which require innovative adaptation and creative strategies for success. Economic diversification and rapid growth in the service sector are happening simultaneously with increased emphasis on exports and global markets and a new phase of developments in the forestry and energy industries.

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While these new developments increase demands for a skilled, adaptable, and capable workforce, the composition and character of the labour market is changing as a result of declining birthrates and other demographic changes.

The following pages provide a basic overview of today's labour market and a synopsis of major trends. Also included is some statistical background information on underemployed segments of the population. Some members of these groups in the labour market face a variety of barriers when seeking employment, especially in trades and technical occupations. Among these barriers are:

-- lack of appropriate career counselling
-- scarcity of role models
-- fear of failure on the job, in interviews, or in training
-- concern about employer attitudes

The statistical fact sheets, which are based on census data and labour market research, are designed to provide interested employers with a base of information on the designated groups as a first step in removing barriers to employment.

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Development and training of Albertans first for Alberta jobs makes good business sense, but it will take a determined effort by business, educational institutions and government to develop, train, and keep the skilled workers Alberta needs for a prosperous and stable future.

If you have any comments on the information in this kit, or if you would like more information on these and related topics, please contact any Career Development and Employment office.

LABOUR MARKET TRENDS

NATURAL POPULATION GROWTH (BIRTHS MINUS DEATHS) IS DECLINING

Alberta will have to rely heavily on new immigrants for a continuing supply of workers. Most new immigrants will be from non-European, non-English speaking countries. This has wide-ranging implications for changes in recruitment and selection, assessment of foreign education and experience, English as a second language teaching, training methods and supervisory/employee relations training within Alberta companies.

THERE WILL BE FEWER YOUNG JOB SEEKERS AGE 15 TO 24

Many of the new labour market entrants in the post "baby boom" era will be Natives, immigrants, and young men and women with special needs. There may be a continuing demand for youth-focussed counselling, education, training, and work experience programs.

ALBERTA HAS A RELATIVELY YOUNG AND EXPERIENCED WORKFORCE

The Province will continue to be in a good position to attract industry through the 1990's because Alberta has proportionately more workers age 25 to 44 than other provinces.

THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE OVER 45 WILL CONTINUE TO INCREASE

This is a nation-wide trend which may lead to a renewed appreciation of older workers as a valuable source of experienced labour. Many of this age group will be displaced as a consequence of industrial restructuring and technological change and will require counselling, upgrading, and retraining.

MOST NEW JOBS ARE CREATED BY SMALL SERVICE SECTOR FIRMS

Many small firms cannot afford to provide adequate training for either new or existing staff. Government and training institutions have a role to play in assisting industry and workers adapt to ever-changing skill requirements.

THE EDUCATION LEVEL OF ALBERTA'S WORKERS IS RISING

New workers without a post-secondary education will have very limited opportunities for employment and advanced training programs. There will be a continuing demand for educational upgrading programs as a bridge to further job-related training opportunities.

DEMANDS FORECAST FOR TRADES AND TECHNICAL OCCUPATIONS

CONSTRUCTION

After reaching an all-time peak of 123,000 workers in the early 1980's, construction employment levels in Alberta dropped by almost 50% to a low of 67,000 workers in 1986. On the strength of economic recovery and the announcement of several major projects in the energy and forestry sectors, employment climbed back up to a level of 81,000 workers in 1989. Labour market and construction industry forecasts predict that this growth will continue through the next five years.

Employment in construction is expected to grow, on average, by approximately 7%, or 65,000 workers, per year. If this happens, employment will grow to over 100,000 workers in 1993. This forecast of strong growth, however, is not expected to be matched by the domestic supply of construction labour, which is expected to increase by only 4% annually over the same five-year period. More than half of Alberta construction companies have said they are having trouble finding workers with the technical skills required by industry. The Construction phase of large resource projects may create between 14,000 and 34,000 work years, over a five-year period (1988-1993). Major skill shortages are expected in trades and technological occupations in the following fields:

-- Pipefitting and Plumbing
-- Insulating
-- Carpentry
-- Roofing
-- Concrete Finishing
-- Electrical

OTHER SECTORS

Business associations and the media have been reporting growing skill shortages in a variety of fields, including:

-- Agriculture
-- Forestry
-- Transportation
-- Manufacturing
-- Retail
-- Service

There is concern in many businesses that economic opportunities in the 1990's may be delayed or missed altogether because of this lack of skilled workers. For many of the jobs in question, the required specialized technical knowledge and skills are supplied through the Alberta apprenticeship training system, institutes of technology, and community colleges. By indenturing apprentices and promoting training now in key demand occupations, employers can start getting ready to develop the additional workers who will be needed in four or five years.

SKILLS TRAINING FOR NEW AND CURRENT EMPLOYEES

Traditional on-the-job training of one or two trainees can often be done under the supervision of an experienced employee, but larger-scale training is usually more effective if it is based on a formal training plan. A training plan requires:

~ A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE NEEDED ON THE JOB;

~ AN ASSESSMENT OF THE TRAINEES' SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE LEVEL;

~ AN OUTLINE OF THE BEST WAY TO IMPART THE NECESSARY SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE.

All Alberta employers, large and small, have access to government training assistance. Government help ranges from free brochures and booklets on human resource management to participation in the development of training plans and financial assistance in broad-based training strategies combining classroom and on-the-job training.

Following are notes on some Alberta training programs:

~ **Tailor-Made Training** may cover up to 75% of training costs in firms which contribute to industrial innovation, diversification or research;

~ **Alberta Training Program** pays $25 per day per worker while learning new skills or how to operate new equipment, and may pay up to $500 per trainee for approved instructor and tuition costs;

~ **Youth Work Experience and Training** can subsidize the wages of previously unemployed young workers up to $3 per hour for 26 weeks, and may cover up to $1,000 of approved training costs.

~ **Post-Secondary Internship and Training** may subsidize wages of recent graduates by up to $4 an hour for 26 weeks, and may cover up to $1,000 of approved training costs.

~ **Apprenticeship and Trade Certification** is a non-subsidy, industry-driven program administered by the Alberta government. It is made up of 52 separate training programs, each of which is a combination of practical on-the-job and classroom technical training which leads to journeyman certification in any one of Alberta's designated skilled trades.

For further information on these and other government programs related to staff training and human resource management, contact one of the Career Development and Employment offices listed in the back of this booklet.

For information on Federal government training and innovation programs available as part of the Canadian Jobs Strategy, contact your local Canada Employment Centre.

WOMEN IN ALBERTA

POPULATION BASE
Of the estimated 2.4 million Albertans, nearly one-third (792,000) are women between the ages of 15 and 65.

LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION
Four-fifths (79.3%) of all Alberta women age 20 to 44 are in the labour market. Labour market participation drops to 45% for women over the age of 45.

EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT
In May 1989, the unemployment rate for females was 6.7% (45,000 jobless), compared to 50,000 jobless men. Of working women, approximately one quarter (24.2%) worked part-time only, compared to 6.5% of male workers.

EDUCATION LEVELS
Historically, women have had fewer years of formal education than men. More than two-thirds (67.1%) of women did not go beyond high school, compared to 63.2% of men. Fewer than one in ten women (9.6%) hold university degrees, compared to 12.7% of men.
But the trend is changing. Female registration in many community colleges has risen to nearly 50%, up from less than 40% in the 1960's. Women now represent more than half (51.3%) of total university enrolment in Alberta, receiving 52.8% of all undergraduate degrees, compared to just over one quarter (26.6%) in the 1960's. But the female participation in post-graduate studies is still low at 44% at the Master's level and 27.5% at the Doctorate level.

PARTICIPATION IN TRADES
Of the 62,000 journeymen listed in Alberta, 7,546 (12%) are women. Of the 18,572 individuals listed as apprentices in June 1989, only 1,964 (9.82%) are women. More than half of them (1,191 women) are in the Beautician trade. Most of the remaining 773 female apprentices are in the Barber, Baker and Cook trades. Women make up less than one percent of apprentices in the Welder, Sheet Metal Worker, and Plumber trades. There are no female apprentices in 21 of the 52 designated trades in Alberta.

OCCUPATIONAL GROUPING
In 1987, half (49.3%) of the female labour force was grouped in the service sector, compared to fewer than one quarter (23.4%) of the male labour force. In 1984, 83.6% of all clerical workers were women. More than twice as many men as women worked in the manufacturing sector.

EARNING POWER
In 1986, 50% of male workers in Alberta earned more than $20,000/year compared to only 25% of women. The average income in 1986 was $23,446 for men, compared to $13,431 for women.

NATIVES

POPULATION BASE

Alberta is home to nearly 15% of Canada's total Native population. One in 20 of all Albertans is of Native origin. Among 2.4 million Albertans in 1986, 104,000 were listed as Native. This includes over 40,000 registered Indians, many of whom live on the 42 Alberta reserves. It also includes approximately 60,000 Metis and others of partial Native origin.

Census figures show that the Native population is significantly younger than the rest of the population. In the early eighties, over half of Natives were under 19, compared to one third of the non-Native population. The birth rate among Native Albertans is considerably higher than the rest of the population.

LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION

According to the 1986 Census, 60% of all Alberta Natives over 15 were in the labour force, compared to nearly three-quarters of the total population.

EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT

The unemployment rate among people of Native origin in recent years has been about three times the rate of other Alberta residents.

Note: Labour market participation and employment rates for Native people are estimated only. Short term employment projects and traditional lifestyles make it difficult to collect accurate statistics. Native people living in remote areas have few opportunities for full time employment near home.

EDUCATION LEVELS

Overall, the Native population receives less formal lifetime education than the total population. One in twenty Natives had no formal schooling, compared to one in one hundred non-Natives. One-quarter of Natives (compared to 10% of non-Natives) had eight or fewer years of education. Only 3.4% of Natives in Alberta have a university degree, compared to 13.2% of the total population.

PARTICIPATION IN TRADES

As of February 1987, 206 (1.1%) of all apprentices in Alberta were Native. There were 91 Native apprentices in the Carpentry trade, 10 in the Painter and Decorator trade, and two in the Floorcovering Mechanic trade. No Native apprentices were listed in 35 of the 52 designated trades. In addition, there are several Native journeymen in Electrical, Heavy Duty Mechanic, and various other trades.

OCCUPATIONAL GROUPING

Census figures tend to show that more than one third of Natives in the labour force are employed in forestry and in the construction industry. There are very few Natives in managerial, administrative, and manufacturing occupations.

EARNING POWER

The average annual income of Natives in 1986 ($12,899) was substantially lower than that of non-Natives ($25,145).

VISIBLE MINORITIES AND IMMIGRANTS

POPULATION BASE

In 1986, an estimated eight percent of Albertans (189,200 individuals) were classified as visible minorities. Approximately eleven percent of both Edmonton's and Calgary's population is composed of visible minorities, compared to 16.7% in Toronto and 20% in Vancouver. One-sixth of Alberta's population was born outside Canada.

LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION

In 1986, census data showed that 72.5% of visible minority group members were in the labour force, which is roughly equivalent to the participation rate in the general population. Visible minorities make up approximately 7% of Alberta's labour force. First-generation immigrants account for more than 15% of Alberta's workforce.

EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT

In 1986, the provincial unemployment rate for visible minorities was 11.7%, higher than the 9.7% rate for the total population.

EDUCATION LEVELS

According to census figures, visible minorities in Canada tend to have a higher level of education than the general population. Approximately one in six visible minorities has a university degree, compared to one in thirteen of the remainder of the population. Among recent immigrants to Alberta, 14% have a university education, 14% have no education, and 72% have a secondary education or less.

OCCUPATIONAL GROUPING

More than two thirds (67%) of visible minorities are employed in professional and clerical occupations, doing manual labour, and in the service industry. Few are in upper management, in skilled crafts, and trades. Since about half of all new immigrants speak little or no English on arrival, the choice of work is limited until language skills are improved.

EARNING POWER

Incomes of visible minorities do not match their educational levels and high labour market participation rates. 1981 census data showed an average annual income for white Canadians of $14,011. For visible minorities it ranges from a high of $14,429 for Japanese Canadians, to $11,986 for Black Canadians, and $8,785 for Canadians of Southeast Asian origin who are among the most recent immigrants. Women visible minority group members earn on average only 57% of the wages of their male counterparts.

Note: Figures on visible minorities include members of visible minorities who have been in Canada for many generations, but do NOT include Canadians of aboriginal origin.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

DEFINITION

Persons with disabilities are defined by Employment and Immigration Canada as *"those, who, for the purposes of employment, consider themselves or believe a potential employer would likely consider them disadvantaged by reason of any persistent physical, mental, psychiatric, learning, or sensory impairment".*

POPULATION BASE

A 1986/87 Alberta survey lists 279,430 persons (12% of the population) as having some kind of disability. Less than one-third of Albertans with disabilities are between the ages of 15 and 44.

LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION

In 1986, 91,390 disabled persons were in the labour force, with a participation rate of 59.4%.

EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT

In 1986, 49.8% of disabled Albertans over age 15 were employed and 9.5% were unemployed. The remaining 40.7% were not in the labour market.

EDUCATION LEVELS

Overall, education levels of disabled Albertans are lower than among the total population. One-fifth of disabled people have fewer than eight years of schooling, compared to 12% of the total population. Fewer than half (41.4%) of the disabled have a secondary education, as compared to 54% of the total population. Only 6.9% of persons with disabilities have a university degree, compared to 13.2% of the total population.

OCCUPATIONAL GROUPING

In 1984, 14.1% of Alberta's disabled labour force was employed in agriculture. Next were service occupations (14.3%), clerical (12.9%), and sales (10%). The construction industry employed approximately 5% of Alberta's disabled labour force.

Note: 27.5% of disabled Albertans over 15 did not state an occupation.

NATURE OF DISABILITIES

Three out of five (59%) of disabled Albertans reported a mobility impairment, 23.5% reported trouble hearing, and 11.6% reported trouble seeing. Only one seventh (13.6%) of persons with disabilities consider their disabilities to be severe.

OLDER WORKERS

POPULATION BASE

In 1986, the total population of Alberta stood at 2.365 million people, of whom 583,000 were over 45 years of age. Almost one-third of the working age population is over 45.

LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION

Almost one in four members of Alberta's labour force is over age 45. More than one-half of Albertans over 45 (52.4%) are active in the labour market, including many over age 65.

EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT

The unemployment rate among older workers in Alberta is 5.9%, compared to 6.7% in the general workforce. The duration of unemployment for workers over 45 is significantly greater than for workers 44 and under. Twice as many unemployed older workers as younger workers have been unemployed for more than twelve months.

OCCUPATIONAL GROUPING AND WORK PATTERNS

Older workers are more substantially represented in goods-producing and blue collar occupations than are workers under 45. One in seven older workers is employed part-time, compared to one in twenty workers under 45. Older workers also have a greater tendency to self-employment than younger workers.

PARTICIPATION IN THE TRADES

Some 16,000 journeymen in Alberta's apprenticeship trades are over 45. This represents nearly one-quarter of Alberta's certified trades people. The average age of a journeyman in Alberta is nearly 40.

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, close to half of Canada's population (42%) will be over 45. Less than 10% of the population will be in the 18-24 age group, normally the prime labour market entrant age. The median age of the population will rise to 41 years.

HUMAN RIGHTS/EMPLOYMENT EQUITY LEGISLATION

THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT was passed into law in August 1986. It set out to achieve systemic equality in the labour force, and to correct any disadvantage in employment experienced by members of the designated groups (women, Natives, visible minorities, and persons with disabilities). It affects the federal public service, Crown corporations, and federally-regulated enterprises employing 100 or more persons. These employers are required to work towards proportionate labour force representation of these groups, the elimination of barriers to employment opportunities, and to report annually to Parliament on their progress.

Part of the Employment Equity Act, the **FEDERAL CONTRACTORS PROGRAM** is designed to ensure that contractors employing 100 or more persons and doing business with the Government of Canada implement equity initiatives. Such implementation must be a condition of any contract bid, and failure to comply will result in the loss of future contract opportunities.

THE CANADIAN CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS (1982) affirms the basic rights of the individual to equality and to protection from many types of discrimination (Section 15). Further, equality of males and females is explicitly guaranteed in Section 28. The Charter is enforced by the courts on a reactive basis.

THE ALBERTA INDIVIDUAL'S RIGHTS PROTECTION ACT (1973) recognizes the fundamental right of every person to equality and freedom from discrimination of many kinds. The Act prohibits the manifestation of discrimination in areas such as applications and advertisements for employment, membership in trade unions, and employment practices. The Act is overseen and enforced by the Alberta Human Rights Commission.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTRES

Bonnyville
2nd Floor, Provincial Building
4904 - 50 Avenue
T0A 0L0
Telephone: 826-6142

Calgary
7th Floor, Century Park Place
855 - 8th Avenue S.W.
T2P 3P1
Telephone: 297-3247

Camrose
B110 Provincial Building
4867 - 50 Street
T4V 1P6
Telephone: 679-1275

Edmonton
One Twelve Professional Building
10050 - 112 Street
T5K 2R4
Telephone: 427-8517

Fort McMurray
7th Floor, West Tower
Jubilee Centre
9915 Franklin Avenue
T9H 2K4
Telephone: 743-7194

Grande Prairie
1201 Provincial Building
10320 - 99 Street
T8V 6J4
Telephone: 538-5430

High Level
P.O. Box 452
10603 - 93 Street
T0H 1Z0
Telephone: 926-2661

Hinton
Yellowhead Building
425 Gregg Avenue
T7V 1N1
Telephone: 865-8293

Lethbridge
402 Professional Building
740 - 4 Avenue South
T1J 0N9
Telephone: 381-5419

Medicine Hat
208 Provincial Building
770 - 6 Street S.W.
T1A 4J6
Telephone: 529-3580

Peace River
9603 - 90 Avenue
T0H 2X0
Telephone: 624-6352

Pincher Creek
Box 2138
226 Provincial Building
782 Main Street
T0K 1W0
Telephone: 627-3922

Red Deer
2nd Floor
Provincial Building
4920 - 51 Street
T4N 6K8
Telephone: 340-5151

Slave Lake
P.O. Box 825
Lakeland Centre
T0G 2A0
Telephone: 849-7220

Vermilion
Main Floor
Provincial Building
4701 - 52 Street
T0B 4M0
Telephone: 853-8111

Wetaskiwin (Satellite Office)
Provincial Building
5201 - 50 Avenue
T9A 0S7
Telephone: 352-1357

Whitecourt
244 Provincial Building
5020 - 52 Avenue
T0E 2L0
Telephone: 778-7132

Career Information Hotline
422-4266 in Edmonton **OR**
Dial "0" and ask for
Zenith 22140